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Le Pretzel to rock again — and price cut is likely

Rumor became reality this week with the announcement that the late, lamented Pretzel Enchaine will be re-opening under new ownership in December.

Roxboro Holdings, Inc., a real estate firm owned by West German investors, has completed negotiations for the purchase of the Clark St. nightspot and the papers were signed Tuesday.

"Enchaine" has been dropped, and Le Pretzel will open either Dec. 6 or 12, depending on the availability of bands and the completion of some minor renovations.

Located on Clark St., just below Sherbrooke, the original Pretzel was launched last June and lasted until September. During its brief life, the 300-seat club booked several outstanding acts, including the Ramones, Streetheart, Doucette, Carolyne Mas and co-median Jimmy Walker.

Running a live rock club downtown has proved difficult, however, and the original Pretzel was doomed to join the RIP list that includes the Esquire, In Concert, L'Eveche and El Casino.

The new owners are planning to buck that trend and are counting on the expertise gained through four years of successfully running the Maples Inn in Pointe Claire.

A spokesman for Roxboro said that the high cost of admission — $5.50 during the week, $6.50 on weekends — doomed the original Pretzel. He claimed it was impossible to develop a regular clientele at those prices.

With that in mind, the revived Pretzel will likely adopt the successful Maples policy of booking strong Canadian bands and keeping ticket prices in the $2.50 to $4 range. A list of upcoming Pretzel acts should be available by next week.

Fans attending the **Oregon** concert at Theatre Outremont tonight will get the chance to hear themselves applauding on a record.

The four-man jazz ensemble will be recording tonight's show for an album tentatively titled *Oregon Live From New York To Montreal*. Part of the LP has already been recorded at Carnegie Hall, and the finished product will be distributed in Canada on the ECM label.

The Dutch Mason Blues Band, which has just released its debut album and is planning a European tour, will bring its highly-acclaimed brand of Nova Scotia blues 'n' boogie to McGill University next Saturday.

The band will play three sets, starting at 9:30 p.m., at the Student Union ballroom on McTavish St., where advance tickets may be purchased.

Toubabou, the percussion band led by Ville Emard Blues Band alumnus Michel Seguin, has been laying low for a while but will be back in action at L'Impreva from Dec. 11 to 16.

The current incarnation of the band includes Seguin on a variety of drums, Senegalese percussionist Ibrahim Gueye and local saxophonist-flautist Gerry Labelle.

Dancers anxious to shake their booties for a good cause can enter a contest at Centre Pierre Charbonneau (3000 Viau St.) tomorrow night.

Sponsored by *Amateurs Actifs de Danse du Quebec*, the competition will include several categories (cha-cha, rhumba and waltzes, in addition to disco) and proceeds will be donated to the Claude St. Jean Foundation, a branch of the National Association of Fredrich's Ataxia.

HOT LICKS
Juan Rodriguez
Mike Boone

MICHEL SEGUIN
Back in action

JACK NICHOLSON
An explosive actor

Nicholson returning to screen with a bang

HOLLYWOOD — Little-seen Oscar winner Jack Nicholson is planning to return to the screen with a bang — literally.

The actor, who has appeared in only one film (*Going South*) since his best-actor win for 1975's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, will "explode" on screen for the fiery conclusion of *The Shining*, Stanley Kubrick's long-delayed (and substantially over-budget) film version of Stephen King's best-seller above a haunted hotel high up in the Colorado mountains.

Just to make sure moviegoers find the film every bit as chilling as the book, Kubrick — a past master of special effects in films like *2001: A Space Odyssey* — has devised perhaps the most spectacular "special effect" of his career: a life-size head of Nicholson will crack open at the conclusion of *The Shining*, unleashing a nightmarish flood of worms.

It's just such effects that have cost Warner Bros. millions of dollars and bumped *The Shining* from its original opening date in December. Now tentatively scheduled for release in May or June of next year, the film had to be very special — both Nicholson and Kubrick, whose last effort, *Barry Lyndon*, flopped badly in North America but grossed well enough in Europe, need a big hit at this point in their careers.

Ringo flees house blaze

HOLLYWOOD — (UPI) — Flames engulfed the rented home of Ringo Starr Wednesday, forcing the former Beatles drummer and several friends to flee the Hollywood Hills residence.

No injuries were reported but damage was estimated at $125,000.

Six companies of firemen extinguished the flames in about half an hour. Officials said the blaze was started by sparks from a fireplace not equipped with a spark arrester.

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ATWATER: NIGHTLY: 4.40, 7.00, 9.00 SAT., SUN.: 12.30, 2.30, 4.40, 7.00, 9.10

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